

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2338

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

SECDEF WASH DC IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER//ECJ4/7 IMMEDIATE

DIA WASH DC IMMEDIATE

USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KINSHASA 2321

PASS PEACE CORPS

USIA FOR IAA, IOP

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, PINS, AEMR, CG, AO

SUBJECT: INVASION: ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL FORCES INVOLVED

1. SUMMARY: FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT, IT APPEARS THAT THE ATTACK UPON SHABA, LED BY THE KATANGAN GENDARMES AND PROBABLY SUPPORTED BY ANGOLA AND ITS ALLIES, IS CALCULATED ULTIMATELY TO TOPPLE THE MOBUTU REGIME. THE REGIME ITSELF IS DEPENDENT UPON THE LOYALTY OF ITS ARMY LEADERSHIP AND QUIESCENCE ON THE PART OF THE PEOPLE OF ZAIRE. IF THE SITUATION PERSISTS, BOTH THE LOYALTY OF THE
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MILITARY AND THE TOLERANCE OF THE PEOPLE FOR MOBUTU'S GOVERNMENT COULD BE DRAWN INTO SERIOUS QUESTION. END SUMMARY.

2. THERE ARE CURRENT INDICATIONS THAT THE INVADING FORCE MAY INTEND TO GO WELL BEYOND A PUNITIVE ASSAULT OR MERELY OCCUPY A PORTION OF LUNDA TRIBAL TERRITORY. HAVING SECURED A STABLE NORTHERN FLANK NEAR KAPANGA AND A SURE SOUTHERN FLANK THROUGH

KISENGE, THE INVADING TROOPS ARE NOW REPORTED TO BE MOVING EASTWARD ALONG THE DILOLO-KOLWEZI AXIS. THEY APPEAR TO BE WELL DISCIPLINED AND SUFFICIENTLY ARMED AND SUPPLIED FROM ANGOLA TO POSE A MAJOR THREAT TO KOLWEZI AND OTHER KEY POINTS IN ZAIRE'S COPPERBELT.

3. WE CONCLUDE THAT THE MINIMUM OBJECTIVE OF THE INVADING FORCES IS TO ESTABLISH A SECURE OPERATIONAL BASE FROM WHICH TO MOUNT INSURGENT ACTIVITY, WHILE THE MAXIMUM OBJECTIVE APPEARS TO BE THE OVERTHROW OF THE MOBUTU GOVERNMENT. INCLUSION OF FAPLA AND CUBAN ELEMENTS, IF LATER CONFIRMED, WOULD SUGGEST A PUSH FOR THE MAXIMUM OBJECTIVE.

4. TO ANALYZE THE ATTACK ON SHABA, ONE MUST CONSIDER THE VARIOUS POLITICAL AND MILITARY FORCES APPARENTLY INVOLVED. THESE INCLUDE: (A) THE GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA, (B) THE KATANGAN GENDARMES, (C) THE SOVIET UNION/CUBA, (D) THE GOVERNMENT OF ZAIRE, (D) THE ARMY OF ZAIRE, (F) ZAIRIAN POLITICAL OPPOSITION, AND (G) THE PEOPLE OF SHABA.

(A) THE GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA.

NETO'S OPEN ANTIPATHY TOWARD MOBUTU AND HIS STEADFAST REFUSAL TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO OFFERS OF NORMALIZATION LEAD US TO CONCLUDE THAT AT LEAST ONE OF HIS GOALS IS TO HAVE A GOVERNMENT IN ZAIRE MORE AMENABLE TO HIS INTERESTS. THE CURRENT INCURSION WOULD SUPPORT THIS VIEW.

THE DURATION AND PENETRATION OF THE HOSTILE THRUST INTO SHABA SUGGESTS THAT THE INCURSION IS MORE THAN A REPRISAL RAID AIMED AT WIPING OUT PURPORTED FNLA OR UNITA BASES. THE USE OF THE KATANGAN GENDARMES, LINKED BY FAMILY AND TRIBAL TIES TO THE PEOPLE OF SHABA, APPEARS TO BE A CAREFULLY PLANNED ATTEMPT BY NETO TO

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CREATE CONDITIONS IN ZAIRE ULTIMATELY LEADING TO THE OVERTHROW OF THE MOBUTU REGIME, AND TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A GOVERNMENT FRIENDLY TO THE PRA. IF THE GENDARMES SHOULD SUCCEED IN WINNING OVER THE POPULATION OF SHABA, THEIR NEXT MOVE WOULD ALMOST INEVITABLY BE AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERMINE THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT FROM WITHIN THROUGH INSURGENT ACTIVITY OR SECESSION. LOSS OF THE VITAL ECONOMIC CENTER OF ZAIRE OR AN OPENLY HOSTILE POLITICAL FORCE WITHIN THE COUNTRY WOULD HAVE A DISASTROUS EFFECT ON THE STABILITY OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT WHICH IS ALREADY UNDER ATTACK FOR THE COUNTRY'S CURRENT WOES.

SUCCESS OF THE KATANGAN OPERATION IN SHABA MAY, HOWEVER, BE DEPENDENT UPON OTHER MILITARY MOVES BY THE ANGOLANS. FOR EXAMPLE, THRUSTS FROM NORTHERN ANGOLA INTO BAS ZAIRE BY THE PRA WOULD HAVE A DEFINITE EFFECT ON THE MORALE OF ZAIRIAN TROOPS AND POPULATION, PARTICULARLY IF THESE INCURSIONS WERE SUPPORTED BY ZAIRIAN DISSIDENTS. IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER THE PRA IS WILLING TO GO THIS FAR IN ITS OBJECTIVE OF UNSEATING MOBUTU.

(B) THE KATANGAN GENDARMES.

AS STATED BY THEIR SPOKESMEN IN KAPANGA AND PARIS, THE

KATANGAN GENDARMES HAVE AS OBJECTIVES THE LIBERATION OF THE SHABA REGION FROM MOBUTU'S CONTROL AND THE OVERTHROW OF HIS REGIME. THE SUCCESS OF THEIR OPERATION DEPENDS TO A LARGE EXTENT ON THE DEGREE OF SUPPORT THAT THEY RECEIVE FROM THE LOCAL POPULATION. IT IS ALSO DEPENDENT, TO SOME DEGREE, ON THE SCOPE OF ASSISTANCE THE ANGOLANS AND THEIR ALLIES ARE WILLING TO PROVIDE. SHOULD THE OPEN CONFLICT PERSIST AND THE ANGOLANS REFUSE TO BECOME FURTHER EMBROILED, THE KATANGANS MIGHT BE OBLIGED TO LOWER THEIR SIGHTS TO A UNIFIED ZAIRE BUT WITHOUT MOBUTU AND WITH PROSPECTS FOR SOME INCREASE IN REGIONAL AUTONOMY.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KINSHASA 2321

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(C) THE SOVIET UNION/CUBA:

WHILE AMEMBASSY MOSCOW MAY BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO ANALYZE SOVIET MOTIVES IN ZAIRE, IT WOULD APPEAR FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT THAT THEIR OBJECTIVES HERE COINCIDE NEATLY WITH THOSE OF THE PRA, NAMELY TO SEE A GOVERNMENT IN ZAIRE SYMPATHETIC TO "SOCIALIST"

INTERESTS. SUCCESS OF THE KATANGAN OPERATION COULD FIT NICELY INTO THEIR OBJECTIVES. WHETHER THE KATANGANS FORCE SECESSION OR THE OVERTHROW OF MOBUTU'S REGIME, THE SOVIET UNION WOULD PROBABLY SEE THE CHANGE AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXERT GREATER INFLUENCE IN ZAIRE AND THEREBY TO ACHIEVE A WIDER OBJECTIVE, I.E. EXTENSION OF
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SOVIET POWER IN CENTRAL AFRICA.

(D) THE GOVERNMENT OF ZAIRE.

MOBUTU'S GOVERNMENT HAS A NUMBER OF IMMEDIATE GOALS IN THIS PRESENT CRISIS: (1) TO REPEL THE INVASION OF ENEMY FORCES AND TO MAINTAIN THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ZAIRE, (2) TO RETAIN POLITICAL CONTROL, AND (3) TO CUT THE LOSS OF INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE WHICH THIS INVASION IMPLIES. CERTAINLY, A LONGER RANGE GOAL, EMPHASIZED BY THIS EXPERIENCE, IS TO HASTEN DEVELOPMENT OF A CREDIBLE MILITARY FORCE AND THE CONCOMITANT EXPANSION OF ZAIRIAN INFLUENCE IN AFRICA.

(E) THE ARMY OF ZAIRE.

THE MOST IMMEDIATE AND OVERT GOAL OF PROFESSIONAL ARMY OFFICERS IS TO REPEL THE INVASION AND TO RE-ESTABLISH FAZ CONTROL OVER THE TERRITORY OF ZAIRE. OF GREATER IMPORTANCE IN THE LONG RUN IS THE ARMY'S GOAL TO PRESERVE ITS PRIVILEGED ROLE WITHIN THE STATE, ASSURING ITS TROOPS AN ACCESS TO STATUS AND MATERIAL WELL BEING, OFTEN DENIED TO THE REST OF THE POPULATION. PROFESSIONAL ARMY OFFICERS HAVE SHOWN A PROPENSITY TO USE RANK FOR PERSONAL ENRICHMENT AND TROOPS, BEING AWARE OF THIS, ARE NOT IMBUED WITH A PARTICULARLY STRONG NATIONAL OR CIVIC COMMITMENT. IN THE EVENT OF A LONG AND POSSIBLY BLOODY CONFLICT IN SHABA, PARTICULARLY WHERE THE ENEMY'S ONLY DEMAND MAY BE THE DISSOLUTION OF THE MOBUTU REGIME, ANY LONG RANGE COMMITMENT TO HIM AS COMMANDER IN CHIEF MAY BE QUESTIONABLE.

(F) ZAIRIAN POLITICAL OPPOSITION.

IN OUR VIEW, MOST OF THOSE ELEMENTS WITHIN ZAIRE WHO ARE OPPOSED TO MOBUTU DESIRE TO RETAIN A UNIFIED ZAIRIAN (OR CONGOLESE) STATE. THEIR IMMEDIATE GOAL IS THE REMOVAL OF THE MOBUTU REGIME WITH THE RETENTION OF STATE SOVEREIGNTY IN ALL AREAS OF ZAIRE. FOR THESE ELEMENTS, THE MOST DESIRABLE SCENARIO WOULD INCLUDE A PROTRACTED CONFLICT IN SHABA, LEADING THE KATANGAN GENDARMES TO SETTLE FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE PRESENT ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT BY THE FAZ. IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW THE OPPOSITION WOULD COME TO TERMS WITH THE KATANGANS.

(G) THE PEOPLE OF SHABA.

WHILE THERE ARE CERTAINLY OLD SEPARATISTS EXTANT IN SHABA, MOST
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SHABANS SEEM TO HAVE ACCEPTED THE UNITY OF ZAIRE AS A DESIRABLE

FACT. IN OUR VIEW, THE PRESENT DESIRE OF MOST SHABANS IS TO HAVE MORE PROGRESSIVE, ENLIGHTENED GOVERNMENT IN KINSHASA AND, TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, MORE REGIONAL AUTONOMY. A PROLONGED CONFLICT WITH MOUNTING ABUSES AGAINST THE LOCAL POPULATION BY FAZ SOLDIERS FROM NORTHERN ZAIRE COULD, OF COURSE, SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE THE SHABANS OPPOSITION TO CENTRAL GOVERNMENT CONTROL.

5. ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE:

AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, GECAMINES' MINERAL PRODUCTION PROVIDES APPROXIMATELY TWO-THIRDS OF ZAIRE'S FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNINGS. WE HAVE NO PRECISE INFORMATION AS TO THE EXTENT THAT PRODUCTION HAS ALREADY BEEN AFFECTED BY PRESENT OPERATIONS, BUT WE DO KNOW THAT GECAMINES' TRUCKS HAVE BEEN COMMANDEERED FOR TROOP MOVEMENTS AND RAILROAD SERVICES HAVE BEEN DISTURBED. IN ADDITION TO DECREASED GOVERNMENTAL REVENUES CAUSED BY REDUCED GECAMINES PRODUCTION, THERE ARE BOUND TO BE ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES FOR TROOP MOVEMENTS, INCREASED FUEL CONSUMPTION, ETC. IF PRODUCTION IS INTERRUPTED TO ANY SIGNIFICANT EXTENT, OR IF THERE ARE MAJOR AND PROLONGED EXPENDITURES CAUSED BY MILITARY ACTION, THE ALREADY PRECARIOUS ZAIRIAN ECONOMY CANNOT SURVIVE WITHOUT CORRESPONDING EXTERNAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. EVEN PRESENT LIMITED MILITARY ACTION ADVERSELY AFFECTS ZAIRE'S ABILITY TO ABIDE BY CONDITIONS OF CONTEMPLATED IMF STANDBY AGREEMENT, WHICH IS A CONDITION PRECEDENT FOR LONDON AGREEMENT WITH PRIVATE BANKS. THUS, ZAIRE'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY HAS ALREADY BEEN JEOPARDIZED BY PRESENT MILITARY ACTION. A PROLONGED CONFLICT OR LOSS OF THE SHABA WOULD BE DISASTROUS FOR THE ECONOMY.

6. CONCLUSION:

THE ATTACK UPON SHABA SEEMS TO HAVE GREATER OBJECTIVES THAN SIMPLE REPRISAL AGAINST GUERRILLA BASES. THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE, APPEARS TO BE THE TOPPLING OF THE MOBUTU REGIME, AND APART FROM THE ZAIRIAN ARMY, THERE WOULD APPEAR TO BE LITTLE INTERNAL OPPOSITION TO THIS GOAL. MOBUTU'S POSITION IS THUS POSITIVELY DEPENDENT UPON THE PERFORMANCE OF HIS MILITARY AND INVERSELY LINKED TO THE

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DETERMINATION OF THE PRA AND THE KATANGAN GENDARMES TO SEE THE INVASION THROUGH. THE PROSPECTS FOR MOBUTU'S WEATHERING THIS STORM WILL BE ASSESSED IN SUBSEQUENT MESSAGE.
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